

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections and further examination are requested. Upon entry of this amendment, claim 13 is amended, and claim 16 is cancelled, leaving claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-15 and 17-23 pending with claims 1 and 13 being independent. No new matter has been added.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 1-3, 5-10 and 12 are allowable and claim 16 includes allowable subject matter.

Objection to the Specification

The specification has been objected to because of a minor informality. In particular, the Examiner states that the substitute specification has not been entered because it was not accompanied by a statement that the substitute specification contains no new matter.

Applicants submit that the substitute specification filed December 19, 2009 contains no new matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that this objection be withdrawn and the substitute specification filed December 19, 2009 be entered.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claims 13-15, 17, 19 and 23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Howe et al. (U.S. 4,805,456).

Applicants submit that independent claim 13 is allowable over the cited prior art, since it now includes all of the subject matter of allowable claim 16. Additionally, since claims 14, 15, 17, 19 and 23 are dependent from independent claim 13, each of these claims is also allowable.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 18 and 20-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Howe et al. Additionally, claims 13-15 and 17-23 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C.

§103(a) as being unpatentable over Howe et al. in view of Burns et al. (U.S. 5,780,742).

As noted above, claim 13 now includes all of the subject matter of allowable claim 16. Therefore, Applicants submit that independent claim 13 and its dependent claims 1-15 and 17-23 are allowable over the cited prior art.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all of the claims now pending in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe there are any remaining issues that must be resolved before this application can be allowed, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Jiro TERADA et al.

/Jeffrey J. Howell/

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